

THE TALON

OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE



■ LINKING CROATIA AND BOSNIA

Engineers rebuild Brcko Road bridge

By Sgt. 1st Class
JACK LEE, 203rd MPAD
and
Sgt. KELLY C. FISCHER,
358th MPAD

GUNJA, Croatia — Call it the prologue to *"Bridging the Sava, The Sequel."*

Using C-4 explosives, demolition experts from B Company, 23rd Engineer Battalion recently removed three giant concrete slabs that were once part of a bridge linking Brcko, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Gunja, Croatia.

The demolition was the first phase of an effort to repair the Brcko Road Bridge, a 2,000-foot concrete and metal structure damaged and rendered impassable during the war.

The rebuilt structure will offer a second Sava River crossing point — the only fixed structure — and relieve pressure on the military supply route over the two Orasje Floating Bridges completed in January.

(Following the demo-

lition, contractor Brown & Root repaired the piers. The 502nd and 586th Engineer Companies — two units that also worked on the Orasje Float Bridge — are now working with a Hungarian engineer battalion to launch two Bailey-type bridges across the two gaps in the span.)

The entire project is scheduled to be finished later this month, said Capt. Michael Farrell, assistant operations officer for the 130th Engineer Brigade, which is overseeing the effort.

Two blasts and about 300 pounds of explosives were required to complete the demolition. The explosions broke the bridge's damaged concrete slabs across the center and collapsed the supporting steel trusses, making room for the bridge to be built over the top.

"We cleared two abutments and minimized the slabs — cut

See *Bridge*, page 12

Stack 'em up ...



Sgt. Angel Clemons

Spc. John Hoffer, a member of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, throws a sandbag while building a .50-caliber machine gun bunker on the perimeter at Camp Lisa.

Russian and U.S. artillery soldiers hold joint exercise

By Staff Sgt. COLIN R. WARD
358th MPAD

KORAJ — U.S. and Russian soldiers continue to prove that former potential adversaries can become fast friends.

The latest example occurred earlier this month when about 50 U.S. soldiers from A Battery, 4th Battalion, 29th Field Artillery traveled to Task Force Eagle's Russian Brigade sector for a professional exchange of fire-support tactics, techniques and procedures.

It was just one in a series of joint operations and exercises conducted recently between U.S. and Russian soldiers serving together with IFOR in northeast Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The soldiers convoyed to the Russian encampment March 9 where they spent four days and three nights in a bombed-out school building that Russian soldiers now call home.

During the exercise, the U.S.

artillerymen assisted their Russian counterparts with the daily task of cutting firewood for the wood-burning stove that heats the old school.

The chore proved to be an "ice breaker" for the soldiers. What followed was a genuine display of camaraderie and interest in each other's work and world.

Soldiers exchanged patches, hats, flags, money, rank insignia, and other items to keep as souvenirs. Flash bulbs popped in the hallways as soldiers documented this historic joint exercise.

"I would just like to have something from the Americans that I could show my family," said Pvt. Colt Pershova of the Russian Airborne Brigade.

The first full day of training began with soldiers doing physical training. After breakfast, the soldiers convoyed to an open field north of the encampment, where the training took place.

See *Artillery*, page 12

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From the top

Task force proactive on EO complaints

During Operation JOINT EN-DEAVOR, some equal opportunity complaints have been filed by Task Force Eagle soldiers. But thanks to an intensive "preventive maintenance" program begun well before the deployment, most of these matters have been resolved on an informal basis.

Most of the complaints involved alleged sexual harassment, as well as religious or racial discrimination. All of the complaints lodged so far have been resolved. Master Sgt. Edward Edmonds, Task Force Eagle equal opportunity NCO, tells me most soldiers do not file formal complaints because they know their informal



**Command Sgt. Maj.
Jack L. Tilley**
1st Armored
Division

complaints will be addressed.

To anyone who is unclear on this subject, this task force does not tolerate discrimination of any type, be it racial, gender or religious.

The 1st Armored Division has long been proactive on EO education, and trained every sergeant major and command sergeant major in the division before deploying. We started training staff sergeants through captains, but had only finished the training of about 350 of these leaders before we deployed.

In April, we will resume these classes, and brigade commanders will select who they want to attend.

The two-day class is tailored for anyone — even civilians — and puts participants in various scenarios in which people are treated unfairly. The role-playing helps bring out various solutions to these real-world problems.

The classes are designed to raise awareness among the leaders of Task Force Eagle, and the knowledge learned will be passed down to troops.

In the meantime, soldiers who have an equal opportunity concern should contact one of several EO advisors we have throughout the area of operation. Edmonds and Capt. Michael Mills, TFE EO officer, can be reached at 558-5727. Other EO advisors include:

• **1st Brigade Combat Team**, Sgt. 1st Class O'Dell Plair, 551-1010

• **2nd Brigade Combat Team**, Sgt. 1st Class Miguel

Pabon, 551-1102

• **4th Brigade**, Sgt. 1st Class Gilbert Minor, 551-4010

• **Division Artillery**, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Migenes, 558-5846

• **Division Engineers**, Sgt. 1st Class Buddy Best, 551-6030.

• **Division Support Command**, Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Watkins, 558-5727

• **16th Corps Support Group**, Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Swinnie, 558-2748

• **22nd Signal Brigade**, Sgt. 1st Class Roman Faliciano, 557-0114

Being proactive on equal opportunity issues is another way to take care of your troops.

We are all professional soldiers. Remember to treat others with the proper dignity and respect. Act on equal opportunity complaints promptly and take swift corrective action.

Viewpoint

The real 'hooah' behind the U.S. Army's hooah

It is not really a word, yet it is one of the most spoken forms of communication in the U.S. Army.

It can mean nothing, or mean just about anything at all. It can be a question or an answer, even the question and the answer. When in doubt, just say it and you'll appear squared away.

Hooah.

Who the heck came up with that? Someone, please tell me.

I mean, only in the Army can you have a perfectly coherent conversation that goes something like this (civilian transla-



**Staff Sgt.
Brian Bowman**
203rd MPAD

tions provided):

Soldier one:

"Hooah (Hello)."

Soldier two:

"Hooah (Hello)."

Soldier one:

"How was chow?"

Soldier two:

"Hooah (Same old, same old.)"

Soldier one: "You

need to go talk to the first sergeant. Hooah? (Ok?)"

Solder two: "Hooah. (No problem. It's taken care of.)"

Soldier one: "Hooah. (Good.) See ya later."

Solder two: "Hooah. (Later, buddy)."

Soldier one: "Hooah (Right back at ya, my man)."

Hey, a few more versatile words like "Hooah," and we'd need only 12, maybe 15 words in the entire English language.

I've polled several people, but no one seems to know the true history of this word. How long has this guttural noise been associated with the G.I.?

But who needs history, anyway? We're talking fate here. It's karma, man.

The Army wouldn't be the Army without hooah. Right? (I mean, hooah?)

Hooah, which means nothing to anyone outside the Army, is a code word to be "in."

If you're in the Army and you never say hooah, stay

away from me. That's bad karma, man. Your vibes aren't right. Maybe you need to meditate on it.

All I know is that, three months ago, before my Army Reserve unit was called to active duty, hooah meant very little to me. I had heard it; I knew what it was, but it meant very little. I wouldn't have been caught uttering it.

But after three months of deployment, dealing with muck, mines and mayhem, hooah makes sense. It explains this whole situation we're now all in.

Wouldn't you agree? (I mean, hooah?)

Hooah.

THE TALON

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Bradley GunnerSgt. Steven R. Maukstad
Public Affairs OfficerMaj. John E. Suttle
NCOICMaster Sgt. Guy Benson
Production Staff: 29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment; 5th Regiment Armory, 29th Division Street, Baltimore, Md. 21201-2288
CommanderMaj. Robert L. Gould
OICCapt. John Goheen
NCOICSgt. 1st Class Bettina E. Tilson
Layout Editor/JournalistSpc. Cesar G. Soriano
Photo EditorSpc. Bryan Driver
JournalistsSgt. Ed Rollins, Spc. George Roache

News briefs

Safety notice

Task Force Eagle soldiers have experienced accidents that could have easily been avoided by using ground guides. In accordance with USAREUR Reg. 385-55, Prevention of Motor Vehicle Accidents, taking short cuts will set the stage for a serious accident. Last year a USAREUR soldier lost his life when he was crushed between two vehicles.

The following procedures will ensure vehicles move safely when maneuvering in motor pools, assembly areas, living areas and other built-up areas:

Use ground guides when backing vehicles and when visibility is limited.

Use a minimum of one ground guide for 1 1/4 ton and smaller vehicles. Use a minimum of two guides for all track vehicles or vehicles larger than 1 1/4 tons.

Use more ground guides when limited visibility requires it.

Ground guides will not position themselves between vehicle being guided and another object.

Ground guides will not walk backwards.

Driver will stop vehicle if they lose sight of ground guide.

Leaders will enforce the standards to protect the force.

For more information, contact the Safety Office at MSE 551-7338 or 551-3510.

Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month, and camps around the Task Force Eagle area of operations are planning commemorative programs.

A Women's History Month luncheon, featuring Sgt. Maj. Mary Sutherland, is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. March 27 at the Lukavac dining facility. For more information, call Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Watkins, DISCOM Equal Opportunity Advisor, at MSE 558-5727.

A commemorative program is set for 4 p.m. March 29 at the Camp Dallas chapel, featuring speaker 1st Lt. Kristin Reisenwebber, adjutant of the 485th Corps Support Battalion, according to Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Swinnie, 16th Corps Support Group Equal Opportunity Supervisor.

For more information, call MSE 558-2748.

Unit helps establish rapid communication for Nordics

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

DOBOJ — High technology is what's on tap when members of 440th Signal Battalion's small extension node team — called "Charlie 63" — arrive on-site.

"What we're doing here is unheard of," said Sgt. Michael W. Ferrera, Charlie 63 team chief.

Before Ferrera's team arrived here in early January, the Nord-Pol Brigade had no means of transmitting data rapidly and efficiently.

Seizing the initiative, Ferrera signed for a Maneuver Control System, which is an Army computer system designed to transmit information much like the Internet.

"We've made an international communications center here," said Ferrera, a Stockton, Calif., native.

The system allows the brigade to receive fragmentary orders, along with other data from Task Force Eagle Headquarters.

Experience gained through the use of personal and home computers allowed the team to expedite the installation of the control system.

"Within 30 minutes we were up and

using the Maneuver Control System," Ferrera said.

Working closely with the Nord-Pol Brigade has also given the five members of Charlie 63 a chance to work on their foreign diplomacy skills.

"This is a good opportunity for our soldiers to learn a little more about the customs of the other countries they're working with," said Capt. Chuck Abare, commander of D Company, 440th Signal Battalion, headquartered in Darmstadt, Germany.

Pfc. Ken S. Fries, a switching systems operator with Charlie 63, and a Mascoutah, Ill., native, has been working side-by-side with the Danish army.

"They're very close knit," Fries said. "They put a real high priority on morale."

One of the first U.S. troops at the Nord-Pol Brigade during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, Fries said, "It's the biggest thing I've ever been a part of ... Communications is always the key."

"Communications is a field that is so different all over the world," Abare said. "When it comes time for newer technologies, maybe the armies involved here will start building those technologies closer together."

Springtime increases disease risk

By the 30th Medical Brigade

With the arrival of warmer temperatures soldiers deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina may be exposed to a variety of debilitating diseases.

One of the most worrisome to Task Force Eagle preventive medicine officials is hemorrhagic fever, which is caused by the Hantavirus.

The virus, similar to the one that caused an outbreak in the Southwestern United States in 1993, is shed in rodent urine, saliva and feces, and transmitted to humans through dust particles.

Hantavirus causes high fever, low blood pressure and kidney problems, associated with malaise, abdominal or lower back pain, flushing, and in more severe forms, bleeding from the gastrointestinal tract, internal organs and skin, according to Lt. Col. (Dr.) William S. Besser, 1st Armored Division Surgeon.

It can be fatal in up to 5 percent of patients, especially children and elderly persons, but generally responds well to prompt care and the drug ribavirin, Besser said.

A few hundred cases of hemorrhagic fever occur annually in the Balkans. It

cannot be transmitted by everyday casual contact, he added.

To assess health hazards to deployed soldiers in the area, the U.S. Army has deployed the 520th Theater Army Medical Laboratory, a medical surveillance unit.

In order to familiarize soldiers with the Hantavirus, the 133rd Medical Detachment (Preventive Medicine) has circulated a fact sheet containing basic medical information and prevention tips.

Attention to cleanliness and the elimination of rodent populations in living and work areas is the key to avoid this rare disease.

All soldiers must keep living and working areas free of food products, garbage, and debris that may attract and harbor rodents.

To disinfect rodent contaminated areas, spray a disinfectant (such as diluted bleach) solution prior to cleaning.

Do not sweep or vacuum rat-contaminated areas. Use a wet mop, broom or towels moistened with disinfectant.

Anyone with a high fever or any of the above symptoms should seek prompt medical attention.

For more information call the 133rd Medical Detachment at 558-5091 or 5093.

■ RELIGION

Six soldiers renew faith through baptism

By **Spc. GEORGE ROACHE**
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — When Spc. Christopher L. Cook deployed to Bosnia as part of Task Force Eagle, he left behind his pregnant wife, Keri, and their 13-month-old baby.

He worried about their welfare and reflected on all that he had not done spiritually.

He discussed his concerns with a chaplain at Comanche Base, where he serves with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation as a mechanic, and came to one conclusion.

"It's time for me to be saved," said the Jonesboro, Ga., native. "Being away from my family — especially my wife — it hurts a lot. I feel if I get saved, the Lord will look after my wife (during) delivery in answer to my prayers. I felt I needed to be baptized, and if there was one going on, this was the right time to do it."

The right time for Cook and five other soldiers was Feb. 25, when Chaplain (Capt.) Daniel Wackerhagen of 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation, and Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dave Campbell of the 18th Military Police Brigade performed Comanche Base's first baptisms.

"Many times when soldiers face separation from family, they look to God to fill the void in their lives," Wackerhagen said. "Also when faced with the threat of death, soldiers confront their mortality. This also causes soldiers to turn to God for help and deliverance. And He helps."

The idea of holding a baptism ceremony started when Cook and two other HHC mechanics, Spcs. Scott Richard of Weirton, N.Y., and Charles Brown of Turon, Kan., went to Wackerhagen's tent following a sermon in the mess hall tent at the end of January, Wackerhagen said.



Spc. George Roache

Spc. William Dock resurfaces from the "baptismal tank" with the help of Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dave Campbell, while other soldiers watch the ceremony.

Brown reflected on his personal problems and wondered how he could help bring peace to a country when he could not even bring peace to himself.

"I've done everything I can for myself for solving my problems," he said. "If anyone can do it, the Lord can lead me in the right direction."

In keeping with his faith, Wackerhagen, a Southern Baptist from Farmville, N.C., performed the baptism by immersion.

He used a HEMMT engine replacement box donated by the 127th Aviation Support Battalion, which also provided a forklift and operator. Contractor Brown & Root filled the 6-foot-long, 4-foot-wide, 4-foot-deep, 1,200-pound container with hot water from the showers at Comanche Base's Tent City.

Spc. Anthony Cunningham and Sgt. Patrick Hopper of the 127th Aviation Support Battalion, and Spc. William Dock of the 18th Military Police Brigade also participated in the ceremony.

"I had been raised around the church all my life," said Hopper, whose wife Melissa and two young children are back at his home in Rome, Ga. "I knew in my heart that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins, but I never lived my life to return what I owe to Him. I felt compelled to renew my faith."

Wackerhagen and Campbell conducted the baptism as part of morning services on Sunday, Feb. 25.

"They had all talked together and wanted the baptism to be a public testimony for what God had done in these soldiers' lives," Wackerhagen said.

Bosnians honor women with special March holiday

Sgt. **KELLY C. FISCHER**
358th MPAD

A female soldier recently received a gift from her husband. It was gift-wrapped beautifully. "It was great just opening it up," she said. "You know, around here you don't really feel like a woman; you're kind of an 'it.'"

Women deployed in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR may feel like just another working soldier. But on March 8, women in the former Yugoslavia were honored with gifts, cards and flowers on "Women's Day."

The day is like a combination of Mother's Day and Valentine's Day, set aside to show appreciation for women. Husbands take care of all the housework, bosses give luncheon parties for females at work and women bring gifts to their women friends.

Ljilja Jankovic, a Serbo-Croatian translator working for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade, said women receive things like flowers, cake or gold on this day. But she does not expect to receive anything this year because she is away from her husband while she works for IFOR.

"It's supposed to be a beautiful day for women, when they don't have to do anything," said Ivana Cvetkovic, another Serbo-Croatian translator with HHC. On this day, people "try to make women happy," she said.

"Now, that would be nice, especially if my husband was here," said Spc. Julia C. Vanek, a medic attached to HHC but assigned to C Company, 501st Forward Support Battalion.

When asked what she would want to receive on "Women's Day," flowers and cake didn't come to mind.

"I'd like to sleep in an extra hour," Vanek said.

Army unit makes history while recording it

By **Spc. CESAR G. SORIANO**
29th MPAD and
Sgt. 1st Class GARY YOUNGER
358th MPAD

Running Task Force Eagle is a massive and complicated undertaking, taking the energies of thousands of people.

Keeping track of it for posterity's sake, however, has been dropped on the shoulders of just six men.

Two Army National Guard Military History Detachments — the 102nd MHD from Topeka, Kan., and the 130th MHD of Raleigh, N.C. — make up the military history team.

"The information we gather will be used for future reference and for future operations," said Maj. Michael D. Yuzakewich, the 130th MHD commander.

The Fayetteville, N.C. native is a language training specialist at Fort Bragg, N.C. He speaks Spanish, French, German and Polish.

"We look at plans, maps, operations orders, briefing charts, etc.," Yuzakewich added. "We get the basic data of what the operation is all about."

In addition to gathering documents, the historians take photographs and conduct interviews.

"We hope to be able to gather as much information as possible

so a complete history of this operation can be written," said Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Droge of the 102nd. "We need all of the information we can get on how Task Force Eagle was put together."

The historians say their job is limited to information gathering. They say they will leave analysis to others.

"We don't analyze events or write what should have happened," said Staff Sgt. John S. Ruehl of the 130th. "We document what really happened."

Documenting Task Force Eagle often takes the historians to the field.

"The vast majority of the history of the operation is not happening in the headquarters buildings," said Ruehl, who works in advertising and marketing in his hometown of Raleigh, N.C. "It's happening with the everyday soldier (who is) out there knee-deep in mud and snow."

"They are more than happy to tell us about their mission, the kind of work they are doing," he added. "They are very proud of what they are doing."

One of Ruehl's favorite interviews was with Sgt. Gerrit Allen, the soldier who placed an American flag in the center of the first Sava River bridge just after engineers completed the now-famous span.



Spc. Cesar G. Soriano

(Left to right) Maj. Michael D. Yuzakewich, Staff Sgt. John S. Ruehl and Sgt. Gerrit Allen compile the history of TFE.

"He was very emotional in expressing how proud he felt to be part of that operation and to top it off with the flag," Ruehl said. "You could see the pain and victory of those engineers through him."

The Sava bridging operation is just one of several events documented by the historians.

Maj. Nels T. Dolan, 102nd commander, was on hand when the U.S. turned over the operation of Checkpoint Shark near Tuzla to Russian soldiers.

"A couple of years ago that would've been unthinkable," said the Manhattan, Kan., high-school history teacher. "And

here I was, at the Russian sector, eating in a Russian mess hall, sitting next to and talking to a Russian soldier. It's a big deal working them and I'm glad to have the chance to do it."

Team members say historians will look kindly on TFE and Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

"I think the future will be excited about some of the things we are documenting," Ruehl said. "Someday in the future, historians will look at this, and see the blood, the sweat and the tears of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR."

"Who knows?" he added. "Maybe someday our photographs will even be in the Smithsonian."

Air liaison keeps Army and Air Force in check

1st Lt. **ALBERT SWEPSON**
358th MPAD

KIME BASE — "Our job has been described as hours of boredom with five minutes of sheer terror," said Senior Airman Rodney Righter, tactical air command and control specialist, 717th Air Support Operations Group, Kirch Goens, Germany.

Righter's job is to provide Col. Gregory Fontenot, 1st Brigade Combat Team commander, with close air support if he needs it. Righter acts as an air liaison officer between Army ground forces and air support.

The job is unique in that it requires Air Force personnel to work almost exclusively with Army units during their tours of duty.

A big part of Righter's mission during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR is to keep close communication with pilots while he's literally within arm's reach of Fontenot. The commander then instructs Righter on how he wants to use his CAS assets.

Once Righter is told to perform a particular mission, he makes contact with the pilot. He does all of his communication with the pilot by radio.

"When the pilot checks in with me, I'll update him on the area of operation and what the mission is," Righter said. "Once I clear him onto a certain altitude, I'll keep a positive control over him in the area. That means giving him an idea of where his borders are and where my location is. If the weather is clear, I'll bring him lower and guide him to a strategic grid coordinate."



1st Lt. Albert Swepton

Senior Airman Rodney Righter contacts pilots by radio.

In turn, the pilot also communicates with Righter by describing terrain to him from about 10,000 feet. Righter then uses that information to guide the pilot directly onto the grid coordinate.

"The most challenging thing for me is to get the pilot to see what I'm talking about," he said.

■ PHOTO FEATURE

Ready First

On patrol in northern Bosnia

By Spc. Bryan Driver
1st AD Public Affairs

The 1st Brigade Combat Team spearheaded Task Force Eagle's crossing of the Sava River into Bosnia-Herzegovina in the early stages of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

Also known as the "Ready First Combat Team," the brigade has more than 2,000 soldiers deployed from the Sava River bridgehead, south to Task Force Eagle Headquarters in Tuzla.

The "Ready First" brigade currently patrols more than 115 kilo-

meters of the zone of separation ensuring compliance with the General Framework Agreement for Peace. The brigade's troops also man several checkpoints in the Posavina Corridor.

The brigade headquarters is located at Camp Kime; 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, Snead Base; 4th Battalion, 67th Armor, Emerald City work area; 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, McGovern Base; 501st Forward Support Battalion, Gentry Base; 23rd Engineer Battalion and 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, Camp Kime and elements of 2nd Battalion, 67th Armor task organized throughout the brigade.



Clockwise from top left: Engineers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 23rd Engineer Battalion, remove a broken-down tank from the zone of separation with an M-88 Tank Recovery Vehicle; Pfc. Keith Holcomb, C Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, cleans his M60 machine gun; a 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry M113 Armored Personnel Carrier crew sets up camp in a muddy, snowy field in the ZOS; a 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry soldier watches the road from the turret of an M113 Personnel Carrier; a 2nd Battalion, 67th Armor M1A1 Abrams tank stands guard at a checkpoint in the Posavina Corridor.



Photos by 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



Recon helicopters keep watch over ZOS

Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

HAMPTON BASE — They resemble aliens from space coming to spy on us.

Their large, helmeted heads sit one apiece on slender necks perched atop each of the eight scout helicopters parked on the concrete strip here.

Their glassy, owl-like eyes look as though they could see thousands of meters.

And that's just how soldiers of D Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry use the mast-mounted sights of OH-58 Delta observer helicopters — for keeping an eye on activity in the nearby zone of separation from a safe distance.

"These birds are forward scouts we use to scout out the area in front of the gun (attack helicopters) to look for ... any activity that shouldn't be going on in the ZOS," said Cpl. Torrell Williams, a Delta crew chief. "It's to make sure there's nobody in the ZOS that shouldn't be there."

"The standoff capability makes these aircraft essential to the mission in this location," said Chief Warrant Officer Robert F. Selje, a helicopter maintenance test pilot from Madison, Wis. "If we're going



Spc. George Roache

Pilots ready an OH-58 Delta helicopter for a recon flight.

to look at a known area of interest, we can stand off (from it) and look at it from great distances without being in any kind of trouble to the aircraft."

Surrounded by a cornfield with the snow-capped mountains of northeast Bosnia visible through the midday haze, Hampton Base sits roughly half-way between zones of separation located to its north and south.

D Troop soldiers moved from Zupanja, Croatia, near the tactical assembly area at Harmon, to Kaposvar, and then to a point this close to the ZOS so "we can

send these aircraft in and check to make sure the zone is clear, do daily reports and go back to check that nothing's moved in," Selje said.

"This is the most forward we have ever been."

In the seven weeks since arriving, the aircraft fly daily and nightly, identifying targets using the optical sensors mounted on top of the helicopter's rotor system.

The sight consists of a television camera and heat sensor, projecting the image on screens in the cockpit, and a laser range finder to determine distances.

Its placement above the rotors enables a scout to hover just below the crest of a mountain or hill and still see over the top.

The left-seat observer controls and operates the sight, which can rotate 360 degrees to see all the way around the aircraft, Selje said. The pilot picks out a target visually, and the observer can focus the sensor on that heading and obtain a better identification.

Armed aircraft, like the nearly 10 AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters also based at Hampton, can use that data for hitting targets.

"Often we can have a remote shot from an Apache or another OH-58 Delta — the armed version — and can send Hellfire missiles in on it, or with our Cobras we can give a heading and the distance," Selje said.

With ground troops pulling security, Selje said soldiers feel safe being so close to the ZOS.

"We have with us Bravo Troops from the 1-1 Cav," he said.

"They're supporting us with Bradleys, M-1s (Abrams tanks) located here with us and guard towers," he said. "We feel pretty secure. They're here to support us. We also house them and feed them here. We take care of them and they take care of us."

Soldiers see clearly with donated safety goggles

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

For the industrious, solutions are sometimes no farther than the mailbox.

Spc. Ian V. Copeland, a member of B Company, 141st Signal Battalion, from Bad Kreuznach, Germany, recently noticed a scratch on the lens of his personal safety glasses, making them difficult to use.

Undaunted, Copeland decided to write the manufacturer, UVEX Safety Inc.

"I told them that, in a nutshell, I had a pair of glasses with a scratched lens and wanted a replacement lens," Copeland said.

In his letter, Copeland also mentioned that his co-workers were interested in the glasses and asked for a catalog. A few weeks later, he received an unexpected package from Harry D. Neff, vice president of sales for UVEX Safety Inc.

"I was surprised he sent 20 pair of glasses," said Copeland, from Bowie, Md.

Along with the glasses, Neff sent 20

replacement lenses. Copeland handed them out to the members of his platoon.

"We're very grateful for what Mr. Neff did," Copeland said. "We wrote him back and thanked him and promised to send him a platoon photo."

Ever since painfully scratching his cornea while working a civilian job, Copeland has had great respect for eye safety.

"If that was a minor eye injury, I can't imagine what a major injury would be like," Copeland said.

As a generator mechanic at the Eagle Base motor pool, Copeland never hesitates to wear safety glasses.

"I try and use them whenever I think they're needed, even if it's something as simple as driving a nail," Copeland said.

Corporate donations aren't new to this deployment.

In February, AT&T set up a free fax line for sending Valentines to NATO troops and Mars Inc., donated 25,000 Dove Candy Bars to troops involved with Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Several other companies have contributed products for the troops, or offered them special discounts.



Sgt. Rick Roth

Mechanic Spc. Ian V. Copeland sports new safety shades sent to his unit.

Signal Battalion pulls double duty for security

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — Keeping a vigilant watch over the main gate of Comanche Base are members of the 141st Signal Battalion.

In addition to their normal job of providing communication resources for Task Force Eagle, 141st Signal Battalion soldiers from Bad Kreuznach, Germany, have been providing the second invaluable service.

"We want to be doing signal work the most, but site security comes first," said Sgt. Mark A. Phillips, a node center operator with A Company, working a one-week shift as main gate sergeant of the guard.

Phillips ensures guards are in place and that every vehicle is stopped and checked before entering post.

Working six-hour shifts, the soldiers are detailed for week-long guard duty rotations.

When inspecting identification and vehicles, the guards stress the importance of maintaining focus.

"We can't just let anyone go walking



Sgt. Rick Roth

Spc. Matthew Hallahan waves on a vehicle while manning a checkpoint.

through here," said Spc. Matthew Hallahan, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native and environmental control specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 141st Signal Battalion.

Members of the signal battalion also laid concertina wire and built fighting positions that surround the gate.

"As long as you avoid complacency, you won't have any problems," Hallahan said.

'Outlaws' provide security on the roads of Bosnia



Sgt. 1st Class Gary Younger

The Outlaws include: (left to right) Sgt. Robert Daul, Spc. Joshua Themann and 2nd Lt. Michael Laney.

Sgt. 1st Class GARY YOUNGER
358th MPAD

VLASNICA — People normally try to steer clear of outlaws.

However, there is a band of outlaws traveling the hills and roads of Bosnia that you may actually want to have around.

The Outlaws of 5th Platoon, 501st Military Police Company, are usually a bunch of good soldiers, laughing and joking with each other like most other soldiers here in Bosnia. However,

when they get down to business, they will do what it takes to get the job done. Each MP in the company carries an M-9 9 mm pistol and an M-16A2 rifle. Several of the soldiers have M-203 grenade launchers, and every armored Humvee has a machine gun mounted, ready to fire at a moment's notice.

Outlaw 55 is the call sign given to the team of Sgt. Robert Daul, 28, of Youngstown, N.Y., and Spc. Joshua Themann, 23, of Midway, Utah. They are often joined by platoon leader, 2nd Lt. Michael Laney, 25, of Buna, Texas. The trio protects soldiers

in the 2nd Brigade area by providing security on convoys and staffing the entry gate at Lodgment Area Lisa.

Daul and Themann, along with their brethren Outlaws rove the lodgment area during the night to make sure that no intruders sneak through the miles of concertina wire encircling the camp.

"We get to see more of Bosnia in a day than some (soldiers) see in a month," said Themann as he tugged on one of the many bungee cords he has hanging throughout his vehicle.

"Punch buggy," said Daul, a nine-year veteran, said as he rapped Themann on the arm. The duo play an observation game when they are on patrol. They try to spot Volkswagen Beetles and the one who spots one first gets to knock the other. It helps them keep vigilant. On a recent patrol, the score was 3-3.

"I just like getting out and dealing with people," said Themann, who hopes to someday be a Utah Highway Patrol trooper. "Nobody likes an MP until they need one, but I guess that's true for most police officers.

"What is tough is all of the

shift work," he said. But I'm not complaining because I'd rather be an MP than anything else."

"We do volunteer for a lot of the missions we go on," Daul interjected. "It helps the time go faster and it gives us something to do. If you aren't working, you are thinking about what you left behind."

When the kidding between the two partners and friends ends, the seriousness of the mission begins.

Themann gets out of the vehicle to act as a roving patrol while Daul keeps his binoculars handy, watching all around to provide as much security as he can for the convoy and the people he is there to protect.

"We can't be complacent," Daul said as he watches a vehicle pass by.

He tells Themann and the other MPs, but the vehicle turns out to be no threat at all. The driver was just going the same direction, following the convoy before turning in front of a house that apparently was his destination.

Just as Daul turns to look a different direction, Themann raps him on the knee and yells, "Punch buggy!"

NEWS FROM GERMANY

Coping with deployment focus of family seminar

By 1st Lt. JEROME S. LORING
114th MPAD

DEXHEIM, Germany — Spouses and children of deployed soldiers from Anderson Barracks gathered here recently for a seminar on "Dealing with Deployment."

"There are really no experts, but if there are, you are the experts," Kevin Russell, a social worker with Social Work Services at the Bad Kreuznach Health Clinic, told the group.

The seminar was designed to give people the opportunity to share their experiences — those that have worked and those that haven't. Helping people with the stress of raising children alone was the primary focus.

"It's my conviction that everybody needs to take parenting classes," said Russell, a parent himself.

"We want to deal with the positive aspects of what works when your spouse is deployed," said Russell. "The moms who have been through this before — they're the experts."

"I've been through this before," read a

quote from the Coping With Separation handout, relating one parent's experiences. "I relax the rules and standards. Go to bed and still be alive is the goal. Anything beyond that is overkill ..."

Others don't handle it as well.

"Being a single parent," another mother said, "there's no time to sleep. I'm exhausted. I don't get to do the activities on weekends that I hoped to do with my husband and all the personal things have to slide. Even household things can't be clean now like I wanted them to be."

"It's healthy for people to use resources," Russell said, "rather than waiting for something to be wrong. This is an example of how a community can work together to provide resources."

Family Assistance Centers and other agencies, such as Youth Services and Social Work Services, have ongoing programs designed to assist families in a variety of needs, said Russell.

"It's an opportunity to let them know," said Russell, "that there is individual counseling available and you don't have to be in desperate straits to utilize it."

Eyes in the sky



Staff Sgt. Colin R. Ward

VLASENICA — Spc. Robert D. Fornel, 22, a radar technician from Queen Creek, Ariz., replaces a scope on an ANTPQ-36 Firefinding Radar System. Using the radar system, Fornel and the other soldiers in B Battery, 25th Field Artillery, 1st Infantry Division, help protect soldiers. The firefinding radar detects hostile artillery, mortars and rockets — often directing counter-fire before the enemy round hits the ground.

To Cav troops, their families, she's just 'Mom'

By 1st Lt. JEROME S. LORING
114th MPAD

KIRCHGOENS, Germany — Food has been the butt of a lot of Army jokes over the years.

However, for the soldiers and families who eat at the 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry "Black Knights" Dining Facility here, the food is not only "just like mama used to make," but you might even think that Mom herself is there.

"If you want people to come, make your food look good and taste good and keep your place clean," said Sgt. 1st Class Elaine Sanders, the dining facility manager and "Mom" to many of the soldiers, remembering the words of their own mother.

"I guess I remind them of their mother or an older sister," said Sanders, who has been in the Army for 22 years and is looking forward to retiring soon.

"I owe everything that I know to my mother, who taught me how to cook," said Sanders, who has been cooking since she was 7 years old.

"I love to see people eat and enjoy it," Sanders said.

Sanders and her staff are striving to make the dining facility a home away from home.



Sgt. 1st Class Elaine Sanders

She encourages deployed soldiers' families to take advantage of Family Night each

Thursday, when families can eat without having to pay a surcharge. A family of four can eat for about \$5.

"We have the best dining facility," Sanders boasts, quickly giving credit to the staff of civilians and soldiers who work for her.

For the soldiers of the 3-5 Cavalry and others who have enjoyed their dining facility, saying goodbye to Sanders will be like saying goodbye to mom.

■ PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Young soldier proud to serve in Bosnia

By Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

Pvt. Michelle Hisle had wanted her first military assignment to be stateside.

It would be the first time away from home for the 18-year-old Pensacola, Fla., native and she wanted time to adjust.

Instead, this young U.S. Army supply clerk found herself in a six-person advance party rolling into Tuzla Valley, tasked with helping to set up a home for other American soldiers serving in Bosnia with the Implementation Force.

For three weeks she shared a four-person tent with five other soldiers at a site that lacked latrines and she got only an occasional cold shower. Her duties included stringing concertina wire around the camp's perimeter and distributing the contents of crates five times her size.

Pictures of her working will appear in the April edition of a national magazine.

A former model for clothing retailer J.C. Penney, she had caught the eye of a visiting *Vanity Fair* photographer who had reportedly taken pictures of singer Mariah Carey and President Bill Clinton the week before, and thought she resembled a 1960s Avon ad.

"Being in Bosnia is a real experience," said Hisle, who proudly describes herself as patriot and uses personal checks embossed with "God Bless America."

"I'm learning to be a soldier the hard way," she said. "I'm not complaining. Whenever you sign up for the Army, you have to expect something like this in order to defend the United States and its ideals. I just wasn't expecting it so soon."

Hisle handles supplies and does daily status reports on vehicles, helicopters and personnel for the Headquarters

and Headquarters Company, 7th Battalion, 227th Aviation at Comanche Base.

She made her transition from high school student to peace enforcer in the Balkans in only six months.

The younger of Floyd and Victoria Steele's two daughters, Hisle graduated from Pine Forest High School in May 1995. She entered basic training as the youngest in her class in June. She turned 18 in July and finished basic in August and advanced individual training in October.

She got two weeks leave after taking a functional course in supply, and then left for Hanau, Germany, joining a unit already preparing for deployment.

Four weeks later, she was sharing a former SCUD missile barracks in Kaposvar, Hungary, with the other soldiers in her battalion.

The trip by convoy to Tuzla took two days. Hisle drove the whole way, intrigued by the war's impact on the region.

At the Sava River separating Croatia and Bosnia, she crossed the famous pontoon bridge erected by U.S. forces. She saw the boats that held the bridge in place bobbing in the water and a dead cow floating in the debris.

While passing through the zone of separation, she and the other drivers were warned by radio to follow the tracks of the vehicles in front of them.

Marked mine fields to their left stretched alongside the road for two miles, while

sturdy but unoccupied fighting positions looked down on them from the steep

hills to their right.

They even spotted an unexploded artillery shell, one-foot long and deadly, lying along their route.

After arriving at Comanche Base, Hisle's advance party lived in a small tent pitched in the mud near one of the former Russian air facility's runways.



Spc. George Roache

Pvt. Michelle Hisle, 18, a former department store model, sports her new fashions as an Army supply specialist.

There were no latrines, portable or otherwise. They had no showers until after the first week but had to drive to nearby Eagle Base for them.

"It was an all-day experience for one cold shower," she said.

Once settled, the group contacted the division for the supplies needed to prepare the base camp for arriving soldiers. Lacking forklifts, Hisle and another soldier broke open the crates of cots, mirrors and footlockers to distribute the items individually.

Three of Hisle's nine months in the Army have been spent on deployment in Bosnia.

"People complain about having little space and how much they have to work, but we could be sitting in fighting positions day after day scared

somebody is going to lob a mortar at us," she said. "The Army is taking care of us."

Hisle has adapted well to being away from home for the first time, said Capt. Robert Kokorda, the battalion's supply and logistics officer.

"For a young kid to show up just out of AIT, come to an overseas unit and be thrust into a very complex deployment, she has done nothing but excellent work," he said. "She has had a great impact on the success of our logistics operations."

And even though Bosnia is her first duty station, she doesn't regret joining the Army, she said.

"I am a patriot if ever you saw one," she said. "America is the greatest country in the world. I am so glad to be an American."

Bridge, from page 1

them in half — so they would fall in between the abutments,” said Staff Sgt. Mark Heidman, a squad leader in B Company.

“There was a lot of detailed work with this demolition,” said Maj. Mark Loring, the 23rd Engineer’s operations officer. “We wanted to drop the girders straight down, so just the right amount of explosives had to be placed on the girders. We also wanted to minimize the missile hazard from the steel.”

The demolition proved to be a satisfying day’s work for the engineers.

“Everyone learned a lot,” said Pvt. Jason W. Komlso, 18, from St. Louis, whose first duty station is Bosnia. “I helped set the charges where they needed to go on the I-beams, made

‘It was a lot of hard work, but we got the job done.’

— *Spc. James E. Campbell*

sure the ‘det’ (detonation) cord was in place and helped damp the charges by placing sandbags over them.”

“It was a lot of hard work,” said Spc. James E. Campbell, 24, an assistant squad leader also from St. Louis, “but we got the job done.”

The Orasje Float Bridge, IFOR’s initial and still primary Sava River crossing point, was made famous by the engineers overcoming frigid temperatures and flooding during its construction.

With the coming of the spring thaw and rains, the bridges will reduce load capacity, due to the speed and height of the river. The Brcko Bridge will keep traffic flowing.



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

IFOR soldiers make their way to the top of the Brcko Road Bridge, which suffered extensive war damage. A rebuilt structure will soon bridge Bosnia with Croatia.

Artillery, from page 1

Russian soldiers peered down the road where the first signs of the rumbling U.S. Army 155 mm howitzers could be seen.

Following a sweep of the artillery emplacement area by the reconnaissance team, the cannons rolled into sight and aligned in a diamond wedge formation. Once the battery was prepared to fire the Russians again examined the weapons, inspecting every inch of the massive systems.

“They are just very big guns,” said Pvt. Alexi Aleosha, as he peered through the sighting device.

The next day it was the Russians’ turn to supply the training activity. In similar fashion, they conducted their artillery emplacement exercise. Given the smaller size of the Russian 2S9 self-propelled artillery vehicle, the action was somewhat faster.

A joint formation was held on the day of the American’s departure. Both commanders exchanged tokens of appreciation. The U.S. soldiers also extended an invitation to their new Russian training partners to visit their lodgement area so they could return the hospitality.

Civil affairs team bridges language gap

By Sgt. KELLEY C. FISCHER
358th MPAD

TASK FORCE BRCKO — As combat engineers work to repair a war-damaged span across the Sava River here, a civil affairs team is assisting the effort by bridging the gap between the military and the local civilian population.

The team, U.S. Army Reservists with the 432nd Civil Affairs Detachment from Green Bay, Wis., was sent to Bosnia-Herzegovina to assist the 23rd Engineer Battalion.

The engineers are helping rebuild a bridge in northeastern Bosnia that connects the Bosnian city of Brcko with the Croatian village of Gunja. The bridge was damaged in the war sometime during the winter of 1992.

The bridge is “going to be important for both sides, not only (because of traffic considerations), but it also is going to allow some of the families that were separated during the war to be able to be reunited without having to do a lot of travel through different parts of the country,” said Maj. Jay A. Clason, 43, the civil-military operation officer for the 23rd Engineer Battalion. “Many of them have gone four years without seeing their family members.”

Though the local people seem to support the rebuilding project, “there is uneasiness about it, because of what hap-

pened during the war,” Clason said. “They are concerned about what it will mean to them when it opens — who will control it and what it will mean for civilian traffic.”

It is part of the civil affairs mission to understand the local attitudes about military missions in their area and to form a communication link to facilitate dialogue.

The team has set up a civil military center in a small tent near the bridge, where people can come and ask questions.

The center does more than simply keep local people informed.

Clason was able to refer a local engineer with questions about the project to the Army engineers. The man offered a copy of the bridge’s original plans. Through that contact, the engineers now have someone to answer questions about how the bridge was built.

Staff Sgt. James H. Koehler, 35, team noncommissioned officer-in-charge for the CA team, left his civilian job as a manager of a wine and spirits store to come to Bosnia.

“(We) coordinate the flow of information about civilians to the military and the military to the civilians,” Koehler said. “With (the) demolition, we have to think about the safety factor and the psychological effect of the explosion going off in an area that has seen conflict. So we’re helping coordinate the information about what’s going on with the demolition and make sure the populace is prepared for it.”